

Mr. President, I have one final point I want to make and that is on this matter of protection for workers' rights, health and safety standards, and environmental standards.

Actually, in many respects, this legislation is weaker than the legislation which last reauthorized fast track in 1988 in these areas. The administration has come in today with a number of so-called initiatives and I am sure we will see more tomorrow, more the next day, and so forth. But, as I read them, none of those initiatives go right to the heart of the fast-track negotiating process in terms of what the negotiating goals should be. Let me just point out that under this legislation, we drastically limit the extent to which workers' rights, health and safety standards, and environmental protection are addressed in the principal negotiating objectives of the fast-track authority. The fast-track authority sets out principal negotiating objectives. And it is those objectives that describe the subject matter of trade agreements which are covered by fast-track procedure.

My very able colleague from Rhode Island, Senator REED, made this point in a very careful and thoughtful way. The bill states that the principal negotiating objectives with respect to labor, health and safety, or environmental standards only include foreign government regulations and other government practices, "including the lowering of or derogation from existing labor, health and safety or environmental standards for the purpose of attracting investment or inhibiting U.S. exports."

"The lowering of or derogation from existing \* \* \* standards. \* \* \*" Thus the bill would not allow for fast track consideration of provisions to improve labor, environmental and health and safety standards in other countries. It, in effect, says they can't lower it. But it says nothing about improving it. And one of the problems, of course, that we face is that environmental standards, workers' standards, health and safety standards in other countries are completely inadequate and we are in that competitive environment.

The principal negotiating objectives, which are what the implementing legislation has to be limited to, leave no room for provisions that are outside a very narrow range, strictly needed to implement the trade agreement. So this provision, despite these assurances now which are coming in, all of which are unilateral assurances by the executive branch and not included in the negotiating objectives, would be included within the fast-track authority. So we are not even going to be able to start addressing this very serious and severe question about the discrepancy between workers' standards, environmental standards, and health and safety standards—between what exists in this country and what exists with a number of our competitors.

What is the answer to that? Are we simply going to accept these lower

standards, many of which result in lower costs, and then continue to experience these growing trade deficits? Are we going to lower our own standards, when clearly we put them into place because we perceive that they are necessary in order to deal with the sort of problems at which they are directed, when we are trying to get the rest of the world to come up not to go down? These are many of the questions that I think need to be addressed on the trade issue.

Very quickly in summary, the fast-track authority represents a tremendous derogation of the power of the Congress. The Constitution gives us the power to regulate foreign commerce and we ought to exercise that power. We do very serious consequential arms control agreements that are open to amendment when they come to the floor of the Senate. We may not amend them. We may decide not to amend them. But we don't give away or forswear the power to do so. I don't see why we should give away or forswear that power when it comes to trade agreements.

Of course we have had this incredible deterioration in our trade situation. That is the issue that ought to be addressed. It would serve everyone's purpose if we rejected the fast-track authority and then provoked or precipitated, as a consequence, a major national debate with respect to trade policy. It is constantly asserted—I understand the economic theory for free trade and I don't really differ with it, although I do submit to you that many of the countries with which we are engaged in trade are not practicing free trade. They are not playing according to the rules. They are manipulating the rules to their own advantage and to our disadvantage—witness these. In many instances the consequence of that is to contribute to these very large trade deficits. But those are the matters that we ought to be debating. We ought to have a full-scale examination of that and the Congress ought not to give away its ability to be a full partner in developing and formulating trade policy. This proposal that is before us, in effect, requires the Congress to give up a significant amount of its authority in reviewing trade agreements. I think, therefore, they don't get the kind of scrutiny which they deserve.

The examination is always on one side. It says, we will get these additional exports. No one looks at what is going to happen on the import side and what the balance will be between the two.

As a consequence of not examining the balance, we have had this incredible deterioration. We used to not do that. We used to have in mind the fact there was a balance and that it was important to us. We sought to sustain that balance, as this line indicates. We held that line for 25 years after World War II. Since then, we have gone into this kind of decline, and I, for one,

think it is time to address that problem. I think the way to begin is not to grant this fast-track authority.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS AND SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, pursuant to section 304 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. sec. 1384), Notices of Adoption of Amendments to Regulations and Submission for Approval were submitted by the Office of Compliance, U.S. Congress. These notices contain amendments to regulations under sections 204, 205 and 215 of the Congressional Accountability Act. Section 204 applies rights and protections of the Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988; section 205 applies rights and protections of the Worker Adjustment Retraining and Notification Act; and section 215 applies rights and protections of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

Section 304 requires these notices and amendments be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD; therefore I ask unanimous consent that the notices and amendments be printed in the RECORD and referred to the appropriate committee for consideration.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE—THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1995: EXTENSION OF RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS UNDER THE EMPLOYEE POLYGRAPH PROTECTION ACT OF 1988

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS AND SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL

Summary: The Board of Directors ("Board") of the Office of Compliance has adopted amendments to the Board's regulations implementing section 204 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 ("CAA"), 2 U.S.C. §1314, and is hereby submitting the amendments to the House of Representatives and the Senate for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and for approval. The CAA applies the rights and protections of eleven labor and employment and public access laws to covered employees and employing offices within the Legislative Branch, and section 204 applies rights and protections